

October 2011

Dear Clients and Friends:

When I was young, my parents gave me a Golden Book called The Little Red Hen. This was one of my favorite stories, along with The Little Engine That Could and the legend of John Henry, the steel-drivin' man. Do kids today know any of these stories?

I remember my Mom working in the kitchen, and she'd say, "Now, who will help me make the bread?" My sister and I knew that story so we'd pipe up, "I will." When some project wasn't turning out right and I was ready to give up, my parents would talk about the little engine that could.

I know this makes me sound really old, but it doesn't seem as though our own grandchildren do much work. Outside of school, that is. Their parents take them to karate and horse riding lessons, which is great. But they miss out on a lot of hard and sweaty duties, like regular house cleaning, weeding, mowing lawns, washing cars and working in the garden. Do city kids today ever get dirty? I mean really dirty.

If you're over fifty, you've lived in the best of times. We grew up when it took some elbow grease to get through childhood. Our parents expected us to work for an allowance, and we walked or rode a bike to get where we wanted to go. It was fun to begin living with new conveniences like air conditioning, color TV and jet travel.

In the year 3000, people may read about the twentieth century and dream of what we experienced. It's like us reading the Little House on the Prairie stories. We can't know Laura Ingalls Wilder's simple pleasures, and our descendants won't know ours.

Regards,



Charles M. Shackelford